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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2411
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC
INFO RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0415
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1494
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0884
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1640
RUEHRK/AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK 0129
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 1070
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0583
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3643

UNCLAS TOKYO 002848

SIPDIS

STATE FOR D, G and OES/OA - MHAYES AND EAP/J - KMIDHA
USDOC FOR NOAA/NMFS - US IWC COMMISSIONER HOGARTH AND
McCARTHY

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [KSCA](#) [IWC](#) [JA](#) [ETRD](#)
SUBJECT: JARPN II WHALING FLEET DEPARTS FOR WESTERN NORTH
PACIFIC

REF: A) 05 TOKYO 2193; B) 05 TOKYO 2932;
C) 05 TOKYO 6131; D) 06 TOKYO 2073
E) 06 TOKYO 2229

SUMMARY

1. Japan's whaling fleet set off the morning of May 23 from three ports to conduct JARPN II (Second Phase of Japan's Whale Research Program under Special Permit in the Western North Pacific), Japan's annual lethal research whaling program in the Western North Pacific, which started in 2000. JARPN II will take a total of 220 minke (100 offshore and 120 coastal), 100 Sei, 50 Bryde's, and 10 Sperm whales and return to Japan in mid-September. The fleet, comprised of the 8,030-ton mother ship, Nisshin Maru, and three catcher and sighting vessels, will collect data such as stomach contents and accumulated chemical pollutants of the culled whales before selling the meat in Japanese markets. In part due to overall declining interest in whaling issues in Japan, media outlets largely ignored the news. END SUMMARY

Disinterested Press and Quiet NGOs

2. Although the FAJ and the Institute of Cetacean Research published press releases on May 22 (para 3), the Japanese press overall did not report the news, except for a local newspaper in Akita Prefecture in northern Japan, which picked up a wire article on the departure of JARPN II from Kyodo News. Tetsuji Ida, staff writer at Kyodo News, said that nation-wide interest in whaling issues in general has been declining as most people, except those living in traditional whaling port areas, do not care to eat whale meat. Unless there are dramatic changes in catch and species, such as under JARPA II (refs), Japanese national media will not carry articles on whaling, says Ida. Major NGOs also no longer demonstrate. According to Sasaki Junichi, Campaign Manager of Greenpeace Japan, Greenpeace International has not issued an official protest on JARPN II, though it remains opposed to whaling. A small Tokyo-based NGO, the Dolphin and Whale Action Network, however, published a

critical opinion piece, noting that it was surprised to hear the news because only one month had passed since the return of JARPA II (Antarctic) and questions the scientific credibility of Japan's research whaling program.

13. The following is post's unofficial translation of FAJ's Press Release, dated May 22, 2006:

Begin Press Release:

Subject: The departure of the Second Phase of Japan's Whale Research Program under Special Permit in the Western North Pacific

1. Research Fleet and Departure

(1) Departure Date and Place:

May 23, 2006, departing from Onomichi City, Hiroshima Prefecture

Mother ship: Nisshin Maru (8,030 tons, 126 crew members including Captain Tomoyuki Ogawa)

May 23, 2006, departing from Shimonoseki City, Yamaguchi Prefecture

Catcher and sighting vessel: Yushin Maru No.2 (747 tons, 20 crew members including Captain Kiyoshi Matsuzaka)

Catcher and sighting vessel: Kyo Maru No.2 (747 tons, 20 crew members including Captain Toshiyuki Miura)

May 23, 2006, departing from Shiogama City, Miyagi Prefecture

Catcher and sighting vessel: Yushin Maru (720 tons, 21 crew members including Captain Kiyoji Hirose)

May 15, 2006, having already departed from Shiogama City, Miyagi Prefecture

Dedicated sighting vessel: Kyoshin Maru No.2 (373 tons, 22 crew members including Captain Koji Takeshita)

(2) Duration

May 23 to mid-September, 2006

2. Objective

(1) Elucidate cetaceans' food intake ecology and their role in ecosystem

(2) Conduct research on how the ocean environment (pollutants, ocean conditions, etc.) affects cetaceans and marine ecosystem

(3) Elucidate cetaceans' stock structure

3. The Catch Number

100 minke (plus 120 in coastal research whaling), 50 Brydes, 100 Sei, and 10 Sperm

4. Organization Conducting the Expedition

The Institute of Cetacean Research

(Note) Estimated Cetacean Stock in the Western North Pacific

Minke About 25,000

Brydes About 25,000

Sei About 69,000

Sperm About 102,000

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Visit also URL that carries this press release:

<http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/release/index.html>

End of Press Release

SCHIEFFER